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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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10/673,316

09/30/2003

Timothy W. Chapman

6052-136/HRH

2267

1059 7590 04/09/2007

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EXAMINER

MCDOWELL, SUZANNE E

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

1732

SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD OF RESPONSE	MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
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3 MONTHS

04/09/2007

PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire 6 MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Eissinger et al. (US Patent 5,658,027). Eissinger et al. teaches the basic method of forming an automobile part as follows: placing an insert reinforcement member (28) into apertures (24, 26); i.e., subcavities, in a mold (10) formed from two mold halves (16,18); extruding a parison (14) between the mold halves (16, 18); and inflating the parison to conform to the shape of the molds, whereby the inflating causes the parison to at least partially envelop the reinforcement member (column 3, lines 18-35). Eissinger et al. further teaches recess portions (38, 40) in the mold; i.e., also subcavities. Eissinger et al. does not teach that the insert is held by vacuum. It is generally well known in the art to use vacuum to hold a preform in a mold, in order to ensure that the inflating parison correctly envelops the desired portion(s) of the insert. It would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to use generally well known molding techniques, such as vacuum, to modify the method taught by Eissinger et al. in order to ensure precise placement of the insert in the final product.

Eissinger et al. does not teach that the finished product is a running board assembly. It is generally well known in the art to use blow molding to form various automobile parts, in order to form

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parts that are lighter and cheaper than those manufactured by other methods. It would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to use generally well known blow molding techniques, such as those taught by Eissinger et al., in order to form any desired automobile part, such as a bumper, seat, door trim, etc.

Allowable Subject Matter

3. Claims 2-17 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Conclusion

4. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Fogle, Jr. et al. (US Patent 4,346,734); Huse (US Patent 7,011,787); and Cooper (US Patent 7,125,466), all of which teach blow molding around inserts to form various automobile parts..

5. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Suzanne E. McDowell whose telephone number is (571) 272-1205. The examiner can normally be reached on Tuesday-Friday 7am-7pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Christina Johnson can be reached on (571) 272-1176. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Suzanne E. McDowell', with a large, stylized initial 'S'.

Suzanne E. McDowell
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1732

SEM
March 5, 2007